

Application No.: 10/506,827
Amendment Dated: September 14, 2005
Response to Office Action of June 30, 2005

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Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. - 100. (canceled)

101. (currently amended) A sampling device for collecting a component from an animal or animal tissue, said sampling device comprising:

at least one fibre having an a coated end which is at least partially coated with an extraction phase for extracting said component; and

a positioning device for guiding said coated end into position within the animal or animal tissue, said positioning device comprising: (a) an attachment region attachable to said animal or animal tissue for immobilizing the positioning device with respect to the animal or animal tissue, and (b) a fiber holding region attached to said fibre, said fiber holding region being movable with respect to the fibre holding region, to move said coated end into or out of the animal or animal tissue.

102. (currently amended) The sampling device of claim 101, wherein said fibre is at least partially coated with a biocompatible protection layer.

103. (currently amended) The sampling device of claim 102, wherein said biocompatible protection layer comprises polypyrrole or derivatised cellulose and said extraction phase comprises either (a) a polymeric composition selected from the group consisting of substituted or unsubstituted poly (dimethylsiloxane), polyacrylate, poly (ethylene glycol), carbon, poly(divinylbenzene) and polypyrrole or (b) a bioaffinity agent on the surface of the extraction phase, said bioaffinity agent being selected from the group consisting of a selective cavity, a molecular recognition moiety, a ~~molecular~~ molecularly imprinted polymer and an immobilized antibody.

104. (currently amended) The sampling device of claim 101, wherein said extraction phase is a matrix for a MALDI-TOFMS analysis.

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105. (currently amended) The sampling device of claim 101, wherein said extraction phase contains a calibrant.

106. (currently amended) The sampling device of claim 101, wherein said extraction phase contains a fluorescent label or an enzyme.

107. (currently amended) The sampling device of claim 101, further comprising an openable housing for said fibre.

108. (currently amended) The sampling device of claim 101, wherein said positioning device includes comprises a catheter attachable to an animal or animal tissue.

109. (currently amended) The sampling device of claim 101, comprising a plurality of said fibres capable of being simultaneously positioned in separate locations in said animal or animal tissue.

110. - 116. (canceled)

117. (new) The sampling device of claim 101, wherein said positioning device comprises a stage on which an animal or animal tissue is immobilized, and said fibre holding region is disposed above the micropositioner stage and is downwardly movable with respect to the micropositioner stage.